

BETHLEHEM TURNS INTO REGULAR HOME OF THE DEATH-DEALING SHRAPNEL

BY DEAN HALLIDAY

Bethlehem, Pa., Sept. 20.—This little town of Bethlehem—named 174 years ago after the birthplace of Jesus Christ — has now become the birthplace of death!

Founded in 1741 by a group of evangelists seeking to spread the teachings of Christ in the New World it has—in 1915 — become a town boomed by death, for here the great Bethlehem steel mills, owned by Chas. M. Schwab, are busy, day and night, turning out millions of dollars' worth of shells and guns for the allies.

Its founders, as they approached the south bank of the Lehigh river, were (as it is written in the history of the town) so charmed by the "saintly solitude" of the little valley that they decided to found a settlement there.

Today, if one takes the same pathway down into the valley, one comes upon Bethlehem through the Catholic cemetery, and then, looking down through a vista of white limestone crosses, one can see a part of the town and the great Schwab works, its tall smokestacks belching forth fire that forges death-dealing instruments.

It is really South Bethlehem that has had success thrust upon it by shrapnel, for the Lehigh divides the town—which, for a town of its size, is the most cosmopolitan in the United States.

Its voice is made up of 20 tongues, but just now South Bethlehem does not talk much of war. Of its 35,000 people, 10,000 and more are Austrians—the men Ambassador Dumba is charged with trying to incite to strike in order to tie up the allies' war orders. They do not care to talk much of war; nor does the steel company want them to!

These are prosperous days in Bethlehem. Third st., which hugs close

up against the ten-foot thick brick wall enclosing the plant (as though it knew enough to stick to a good thing), is busy by day and gay—a sort of dirty, grimy gayness — by night. Folks work hard and play hard.

The town IS prosperous, but it is the solid sort of forced prosperity that comes of hard labor and good pay.

Off work the men rush for the saloons. Worn out, they want their beer. Big, brutish fellows, most of them, their animal natures call for fun, boisterous, furious fun, before they sleep—and then go back to the mills.

And so they get it in the quickest way possible — by buying whiskey. Drinking it because it is also the cheapest in the long run. With a little whiskey they get quicker results—and although they have plenty of money in their pockets they are trying to save a little. "After the war—what then?" they say to themselves.

But at that the money, although it comes only by hard work, goes easy.

Rents are up, too! "Hunkies," as the English speaking say here, are paying \$16 to \$18 a month for rent where before the war they paid \$12 and \$14. But they are making \$1.60 a day and can work seven days a week if they wish. And they are eating meat twice a day, whereas in the old country they were lucky to taste it once a week—so they are satisfied.

South Bethlehem is the Bethlehem Steel Co.—Schwab's works envelops the daily routine and life of the people just as the town itself is wrapped in the clouds of soot and smoke from the tall stacks of the plant. "Hunkies," when they talk of the works, talk with respect in their voices.

It cut through the heart of the town—big plant after big plant—and when the town grows tired and stops, as it soon does, the Schwab works keep